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COMING SOON TO A BANKRUPTCY COURT NEAR YOU-

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Introduction.

The federal courts and the Administrative Office of United States Courts (AO) have embarked on a long-term project of moving the federal courts from their legacy docketing systems to a new case management and electronic case files system. The new system, called Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF), provides federal courts with enhanced and updated docket management. It also allows them to maintain case documents in electronic form and provides each court the option of permitting case documents—pleadings, motions, petitions—to be filed with the court over the Internet. For federal courts fully adopting the system, CM/

ECF will provide a new, easy-to-use electronic case filing feature that will make life easier for external users by allowing them to file and view court documents over the Internet.

The national roll-out of the CM/ECF system for bankruptcy courts started in March 2001, and is scheduled to take two to three years. The CM/ECF system for district courts is scheduled to roll out nationally starting mid-2002. The CM/ECF system for appellate courts is expected to be ready for use toward the middle of 2003.

As of the end of 2001, CM/ECF systems were in use in seven district courts, eighteen bankruptcy courts, and the Court of International Trade. Of these courts, seven district courts and twelve bankruptcy courts are accepting electronic filings. Additional bankruptcy and district courts are scheduled to implement CM/ECF over the next several months. So far in these courts, more than 5 million documents in more than a million cases are on CM/ECF systems. Close to 15,000 attorneys and others have filed documents over the Internet.

Case Management/Electronic Case Files

CM/ECF is a convenient new automated case management and docketing system designed specifically for the federal courts. The case management and docketing (CM) portion replaces the aging software currently used by most federal courts with a nation-

NORTON BANKRUPTCY LAW ADVISER

ally-supported but flexible system that provides customizable docketing and reporting capability. The electronic case files (ECF) portion allows courts to manage documents electronically; provide 24-hour desktop access to a court's case files by judges, court staff, attorneys, and the public; and accept filings over the Internet by authorized users.

The new system has been developed for several reasons. First, because the existing case management systems, which are more than a decade old, are aging and will soon exceed their projected life-spans. Second, because the database program underlying existing systems is no longer supported by its manufacturer and is increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain. Third, because the new system will offer the courts, the bar and the public enhanced capabilities by using updated technology.

How CM/ECF Works.

Courts control the implementation process of CM/ECF locally. Individual courts may start with CM only, simply replacing their current docketing/case management system. Later, they can add the ECF portion, which would move them to full implementation of CM/ECF. Other courts may implement CM and ECF almost simultaneously. Full implementation of CM/ECF allows a court to take advantage of all the efficiencies built into the system.

Attorneys practicing in courts offering the electronic filing capability are able to file documents directly with the court over the Internet. The CM/ECF system uses standard computer hardware, an Internet connection and a browser, and accepts documents in Portable Document Format (PDF). PDF retains the way a document looks, so the pages, fonts and other formatting are preserved. As set forth in the following steps, filing a document with the court's CM/ECF system is quite easy:

- Create the document using word processing software.
- Save the document in PDF format.
- Log onto the court's CM/ECF system, using a court-issued login and password.
- Follow the set of simple prompts to provide information about the case, party and document to be filed.
- Attach the PDF document and submit it to the court for filing (by pressing a submit button).
- Receive the CM/ECF electronic receipt e-mailed from the court confirming that the document was filed.

Upon receiving the CM/ECF electronic receipt, the attorney can save or print the receipt for future reference. In addition, other parties in the case who are users of the system automatically receive e-mail notification of the filing with a hyperlink to the document filed. Upon accessing the document, the recipient can view, save or print a copy of the document.

Benefits of CM/ECF

Benefits for Authorized Users. CM/ECF provides many benefits to attorneys and other individuals authorized by the court to file documents in the system. CM/ECF will allow these users to file documents from their office, home or anywhere they have access to the Internet, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Documents filed in this manner are automatically docketed and made part of the court's electronic case file as part of the filing process, are immediately available electronically as part of the case file, and can be automatically served electronically to other authorized users. An automatic verification, in the form of a "Notice of Electronic Filing," is sent by e-mail to the filer immediately after filing. In addition to the above convenience, CM/ECF may provide its users the following benefits:

- Automatic e-mail notice of case activity;
- reduction in courier fees;
- reduction in travel time and costs;
- reduction in postage costs.
- Report functionality

Moreover, since CM/ECF uses Internet standard software, the out-of-pocket cost of participation for attorneys is typically very low.

Benefits for Everyone. In addition to those benefits mentioned above, CM/ECF provides many more benefits for all users. Both authorized users and the general public will benefit from a court's implementation of CM/ECF. The following is a list of some general benefits of the system:

- 24-hour access over the Internet to filed documents;
- 24-hour access over the Internet to electronic docket sheets;
- the ability to download and print documents directly from the court system;
- concurrent access to docket sheets by multiple parties and the court;
- concurrent access to case files by multiple parties and the court;

- secure storage of documents (files are not misplaced);
- reduction in courier fees, travel fees and other costs of retrieving documents from the court;
- documents are available as soon as they are filed;
- docket sheets are updated immediately when documents are filed.

Issues and Concerns.

As already mentioned, CM/ECF is easy to use and provides the bar and the public many advantages over the legacy systems; however, some valid issues and concerns have been raised by attorneys and others concerning the system. Some of the more common issues or concerns raised by attorneys and others pertain to costs in terms of money, time and effort to be expended purchasing and configuring the computer hardware and software, and learning the new system. Over time, local courts alleviate many of these concerns by providing attorneys and other users with an abundance of information, training and support.

Computer Hardware and Software. CM/ECF requires that the user maintain certain computer hardware and software. Initially, this requirement may appear to be a costly endeavor; however, many users find that they already have most or all of the hardware and software needed to operate in the CM/ECF environment. For those that need to purchase hardware or software, they often find that the costs of such technology are relatively small compared to potential cost savings from using the system. Currently, filers will need the following hardware and software to file documents in the CM/ECF electronic filing system (updates to these requirements can be found by contacting your local court or by accessing the federal judiciary's web site cited below under "Resources"):

- A personal computer running a standard platform such as Windows or Macintosh.
- A PDF-compatible word processor like Macintosh or Windows-based versions of WordPerfect or Word.
- Internet service.
- Netscape Navigator version 4.6 or 4.7. (Netscape 6 is not recommended for use with CM/ECF. CM/ECF technical staff are currently testing Internet Explorer version 5.5 to certify its compatibility with the CM/ECF system. However, some users have accessed the system through Internet Explorer with positive results.)
- Software to convert documents from a word processor format to portable document format (PDF). Adobe Acrobat PDF Writer is recommended. Acrobat Writer Version 3.X, 4.X and 5.0 adequately meet the CM/ECF filing requirements.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available for free, is needed for viewing PDF documents.
- A scanner may be necessary to create electronic images of documents that are not in your word processing system.

Training and Support from the Court. Local courts understand that for the CM/ECF system to be fully effective and to provide maximum benefits to everyone, all users of the system both internal to the court and external need to be properly trained and receive ongoing support. Courts have been very aggressive in providing such training and support to attorneys and other authorized users at seminars, in small classroom environments, and on a one-on-one basis. Such training and support has occurred in person at settings ranging from courthouse training rooms to law firm offices, and over the telephone by calling the court's help desk. Court personnel providing the training and support are very knowledgeable about CM/ECF and have proven to be one of the most valuable resources in helping attorneys and other authorized users transition to the new system.

Implementation Status.

Currently, 53 of the 90 bankruptcy courts across the nation are either actively using CM/ECF or are at some stage in the implementation process. Of these courts, 18 are actively using some or all of the CM/ECF program and are considered "live" on the system; and 12 of these 18 are accepting electronic filings. The other 35 bankruptcy courts are in some stage of the implementation process, which usually takes at least 10 months to complete, but can take longer depending on the strategy adopted by the court. In addition to these 53 bankruptcy courts, 18 other bankruptcy courts are scheduled to commence the implementation process over the next few months. The remaining bankruptcy courts that plan to use the CM/ECF system will likely be scheduled to commence the implementation process later in 2002. The goal is to have all CM/ECF bankruptcy courts "live" on the system sometime during 2003. The following lists indicate those bankruptcy courts that are either (i) already operational on CM/ECF, (ii) in the process of implementing CM/ECF, or (iii) beginning the implementation process over the next six months. These lists were current as December 2001; however, due to the significant progress being made by the

NORTON BANKRUPTCY LAW ADVISER

bankruptcy courts, these lists change frequently. The judiciary's web site (*see* "Resources" below) main-

tains current information concerning the implementation status of the various bankruptcy courts.

Bankruptcy Courts Currently Operational on CM/ECF (18)

Alaska	Louisiana Eastern	Ohio Northern
Arizona	Louisiana Middle	South Dakota
Arkansas	Missouri Western	Texas Western
California Southern	New Hampshire	Utah
Delaware	New York Southern	Virginia Eastern
Georgia Northern	North Carolina Western	Washington Western

Bankruptcy Courts Currently in the Process of Implementing CM/ECF (35)

Alabama Middle	Maryland	Pennsylvania Middle
Alabama Southern	Maine	Pennsylvania Western
Colorado	Mississippi Northern	South Carolina
District of Columbia	Montana	Tennessee Middle
Georgia Middle	Nebraska	Texas Eastern
Illinois Southern	Nevada	Texas Southern
Indiana Northern	New Jersey	Vermont
Iowa Northern	New York Eastern	West Virginia Northern
Iowa Southern	New York Northern	Wisconsin Eastern
Kentucky Eastern	Ohio Southern	Wisconsin Western
Kentucky Western	Oregon	Wyoming
Louisiana Western	Pennsylvania Eastern	

Bankruptcy Courts Beginning Implementation Process Over Next Six Months (18)

California Northern	Massachusetts	North Carolina Middle
Connecticut	Michigan Western	Oklahoma Eastern
Florida Middle	Missouri Eastern	Rhode Island
Hawaii	New Mexico	Tennessee Western
Illinois Northern	New York Western	Texas Northern
Kansas	North Carolina Eastern	West Virginia Southern

Frequently Asked Questions.

CM/ECF is new to the bankruptcy courts, attorneys and other individuals who use the system. Because of this, numerous questions have arisen pertaining to the system. Through the process of answering these questions, the local courts and the AO have developed a list of questions frequently asked by attorneys and others using the system. The following are some of those questions along with their respective answers. The judiciary's web site (*see* "Resources" below) maintains a more complete list of the FAQs.

Q. Will all bankruptcy courts offer electronic filing?

ANSWER: The use of CM/ECF's electronic fil-

ing capabilities is at each individual bankruptcy court's option. Many of the bankruptcy courts that have implemented or are in the process of implementing CM/ECF have chosen to offer electronic filing. Contact your local court to obtain information about whether it does or will be offering electronic filing. In addition, for a complete list of courts currently using or in the process of implementing CM/ECF, access the federal judiciary's web page described below under "Resources."

Q. Is CM/ECF currently available in my local bankruptcy court?

ANSWER: The CM/ECF system for bankruptcy

NORTON BANKRUPTCY LAW ADVISER

courts is being implemented nationally over a two-to-three year period starting March 2001. CM/ECF is currently either in use or in the implementation stage in over half of the bankruptcy courts. For information about whether your local court is currently using or is planning to use CM/ECF, contact your local court. In addition, for a complete list of courts currently using or in the process of implementing CM/ECF, access the federal judiciary's web page described below under "Resources."

Q. Can the general public file documents on CM/ECF systems?

ANSWER: No. Filing a document in CM/ECF requires a login and password. Each court determines for itself to whom it will issue filing logins and passwords. At the present time, courts offering electronic filing are providing document filing access principally to attorneys, although some courts are also providing access to U.S. Trustees and bankruptcy case trustees. In addition, a few courts are permitting bankruptcy claimants to file electronically.

Q. Can the general public view CM/ECF cases and the documents in those cases?

ANSWER: Yes, the public can access case information in CM/ECF. The public may view docket sheets and documents in CM/ECF systems through the Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) program. PACER logins and passwords are available to the public at: <http://www.pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/register.html>. PACER offers convenient electronic access to case file documents, listing of all case parties, reports of case related information, chronologies of events entered in the case record, claim registries, listings of new cases, judgments or case status, and a calendar of events. Directed by Congress to fund electronic access through user fees, the federal judiciary has set a fee of seven cents per page for electronic court data via the Internet, except for calendar information, for which there is no charge. The fee applies to all users, although courts may exempt certain persons, such as indigents or bankruptcy case trustees. Parties who are registered CM/ECF users and entitled to documents as part of the legal process receive a free electronic copy, although they will be charged for replacement copies, whether in paper or electronic form.

Q. How does an attorney become an authorized CM/ECF user?

ANSWER: In order for attorneys and other users to be authorized to file documents electronically and to receive e-mail notices of documents that are filed, they must be registered to file electronically within the specific court providing the CM/ECF system. Each court will have its own requirements and procedures for registering. In some courts, only members of the court's bar are permitted to register. In other courts, trustees and some claims filers are also being permitted to register. Upon registration with the court, a filer will be provided an identification name and password that will allow access for the filing aspect of the system. Filers will also need to register with the PACER Service Center to obtain a login and password for the querying component of the system. Visit <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/announcements/general/ecfnews.html> for a complete list of the courts that offer CM/ECF and to learn more about their systems, including filing requirements and procedures, manuals, and other pertinent information.

Q. What type of training will be available?

ANSWER: Each court that offers electronic filing will provide training. Filing documents in CM/ECF is easy; a minimal amount of training is generally all that is needed. Contact your local court to see what training sessions may be offered. Most courts offering CM/ECF access will provide an on-line tutorial, training database, FAQs, and a user manual. If a training database is provided, participants should use it to practice filing before filing a document in the "live" database. A set of training modules is also available on the federal judiciary's web site.

Q. I already have a PACER login and password. Do I need a separate CM/ECF login and password to file documents in CM/ECF?

ANSWER: Yes. Contact your local court to obtain your CM/ECF login and password.

Q. Will authorized users be able to access the CM/ECF system after the court's regular business hours to file cases and documents? Will the general public be able to access the CM/ECF system after the court's regular business hours to review case documents and docket sheets?

ANSWER: CM/ECF can be made available up

NORTON BANKRUPTCY LAW ADVISER

to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for purposes of filing and viewing documents. Availability of the system is up to the local court.

Q. Can an attorney add new attorneys to the database?

ANSWER: Only court staff with appropriate permissions may add attorneys to the database as system users. However, it is possible for an attorney to add another attorney to a case, and to the database, during case opening. The new attorney would NOT have filing privileges. In order to obtain those privileges, the attorney must make the proper application to the court and, if approved, a member of the court staff with appropriate permissions could assign a login and password.

Q. Are there fees associated with CM/ECF?

ANSWER: There are no added fees for filing documents over the Internet using CM/ECF, although existing court document filing fees do apply. Electronic access to individual case docket sheets and filed documents is available through the PACER program. Litigants receive one free copy of documents filed electronically in their cases; additional copies are available to attorneys and to the general public for viewing or downloading at the current PACER cost of seven cents per page. Directed by Congress to fund electronic access through user fees, the federal judiciary has set the fee at the lowest possible level sufficient to recoup program costs.

Q. How are fees paid?

ANSWER: ECF courts generally require attorneys to pay bankruptcy fees for cases filed electronically via credit card payment. The attorney will complete and submit to the court a Credit Card Authorization form with a credit card number for the court to use. The court will maintain the credit card numbers in a secure area and process the bankruptcy fees the day following any filings. Most courts continue to accept cash and checks for over-the-counter filings.

Q. When a user files a pleading with the court, does the system automatically serve the other parties or does the user have to do something extra to serve the others? And, do the other parties just get notification of a filing or do they get the actual document?

ANSWER: The system is set up so that when a court user or attorney files a document with the court, a notice of electronic filing is generated

that includes information about what was filed, the text of the docket entry, the unique document stamp, and a list of case participants that receive e-mail notification of the filing and a list of those that do not. The notice of electronic filing sent to those listed as receiving e-mail notification contains a hyperlink to the document.

Whether or not the receipt of this notice constitutes "service" depends on the provisions of the local rules of procedure. The local rules of some courts provide that sending the court-generated electronic notice of filing with the hyperlink mentioned above constitutes service.

Q. How will signatures on documents be handled for documents filed electronically?

ANSWER: At present, this is a matter for local court rule or order. All courts using electronic filing are currently treating use of an authorized user's unique system login and password as a signature. Most of the courts require that the users retain copies of critical paper documents containing original signatures of parties, such as affidavits or bankruptcy petitions, for a set period of time.

Q. How does the court record and preserve the debtor's original signature? Who will maintain this document? How long must the document be saved?

ANSWER: In most cases, signatures on electronically submitted documents will be indicated with "/s/" above the party's typed name. Documents requiring original signatures would be filed electronically with originally executed copies maintained by the filer. The procedures for preserving the debtor's original signatures vary among the courts. In some courts, the attorney is required to retain paper copies of critical documents, such as affidavits or petitions, containing the debtor's original signature for a set period of time (e.g., four years). Other courts require that the originals of documents requiring signatures must be maintained until the time allowed for appeal has elapsed. Finally, in some courts, the debtor's originally signed declaration concerning the petition and schedules must be stored in the clerk's office.

Q. Are there procedural rules relating to electronic filing?

ANSWER: Rule 5(e) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 5005(a) of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, Rule 25(a) of

the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, and Rule 49(d) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure were all amended in 1996 to authorize individual courts by local rule to permit papers to be filed by electronic means. New amendments to Rules 5(b), 6(e) and 77 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Rules 7005, 9006 and 9022 of the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, which went into effect December 1, 2001, authorize service of documents by electronic means if parties consent. The amendments do not apply to service of process. Comparable amendments to the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure and Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure are also under consideration.

Most courts that offer electronic filing have issued an authorizing local rule; most have supplemented the local rule with a general order and/or procedures that set forth the relevant procedures governing electronic filing in that court. Individual court rules and procedures are generally available on their web sites.

Q. How secure is CM/ECF?

ANSWER: CM/ECF has many security features and has passed an evaluation by the National Security Agency. Access to the system is through a court issued login and password.

Q. Will someone submitting a long document monopolize the system to the detriment of other users? How long will it take to transmit/receive lengthy documents?

ANSWER: A user submitting a large document to CM/ECF will not interfere with other users' access. The system uses web technology which is designed to service large numbers of users simultaneously. The time it takes to transmit or receive a document primarily depends on the user's Internet Service Provider (ISP), modem speed, and the size of PDF file being transmitted or received. Generally, the larger the file, the longer it will take to load. Local courts may restrict the size of certain types of documents by local rule or policy, just as they do currently.

The CM/ECF system will accept both text and image PDF files. The text PDF file is usually the result of saving a document from a word processor in PDF format using Adobe Acrobat PDFWriter. The image PDF file is usually created by scanning a paper document in PDF format. Because it is much smaller in size, the text file can be transmitted to the CM/ECF

application faster than the image file. While the difference in speed is usually not noticeable in a 1 or 2 page document, the difference can be significant when a document reaches about 20 pages in length.

Attorneys may want to submit attachments that are extremely large (more than 50 pages) that will take a long time to download, even in text format. Each court may establish filing procedures that encourage attorneys to file text documents, whenever possible, to break lengthy documents into logical pieces that can be uploaded and downloaded separately, and to label each piece with a descriptive title. This will not only reduce the filing time but will also allow users who wish to access the document(s) to download only those portions needed, thus saving time. There are guidelines concerning this process located on the PACER web site described below under *Resources*.

Q. What happens if a document is filed in error?

ANSWER: Because documents filed in CM/ECF by attorneys and other authorized users come through the Internet, most filing errors will be immediately advertised through the real time electronic notices and access to the docket report. CM/ECF allows court personnel to edit errors made in the docket entry. Individual courts handle this issue in different ways. In addition to making the appropriate corrections, the court may need to ask participants to submit amended pleadings. Instances that affect calendar entries and noticing will need to be redocketed. Many courts are choosing not to edit the docket entry and use a "corrective entry" event, which officially records substantive errors on the docket sheet and will generate a Notice of Electronic Filing. This allows the distribution of the correct information to the participants who originally received the erroneous information.

Standardized text for uniformity in annotating changes have been incorporated by many courts. (Example: ERROR: ATTACHED PDF DOES NOT MATCH DOCKET TEXT).

Q. What about court-generated documents that require certification?

ANSWER: Currently, the bankruptcy courts enter court-generated documents into the CM/ECF system in PDF format. On request, they will print a copy of the document and affix the certification or seal in the traditional manner.

The bankruptcy courts are experimenting with attaching an imaged seal to the Notice of Bankruptcy Case Filing. This is intended to take the place of the traditional seal. If this proves to be successful, it could be expanded to other documents requiring certification or seal.

A long-term solution may be that persons requiring the certified documents (such as sheriffs or banks) can view the electronic document directly in the court's database; this will eliminate the presentation of fraudulent documents that may occur in today's paper environment.

Q. Describe a CM/ECF court's claims process. How are large attachments to claims managed? Are claimants permitted to file through CM/ECF?

ANSWER: Attorneys and other CM/ECF participants can prepare the proof of claim as a word processing document or in a bankruptcy preparation software program, convert it to a .pdf document and submit it to the court. The processing of claims with attachments varies among CM/ECF courts. The practices include scanning all claim documents, scanning a set number of pages, scanning a one-page summary, breaking the attachment into manageable smaller files and scanning them separately, or scanning the front page which has been stamped to indicate that the attachment is available in the clerk's office. Many courts are allowing certain creditors (e.g., claimants who file large numbers of claims) limited access to CM/ECF for the purpose of filing claims and related documents.

Q. Do documents that will be filed on CM/ECF systems need to be in a particular format?

ANSWER: Yes. CM/ECF systems are designed to accept only documents in PDF format. This format was chosen because it allows a document to retain its pagination, formatting and fonts no matter what type of computer is used to view or print the document. It is also an open standard format. Adobe developed the format, and offers software that allows conversion of documents created in most word processing systems into PDF. This software is recommended. Several word processing and other programs contain features that convert documents created in those programs into PDF.

Q. What is Adobe Acrobat?

ANSWER: Adobe Acrobat is a commercial software package that enables you to save your document in PDF (Portable Document Format).

Q. How do I find information concerning how to create a PDF file and how to ensure that the printed copy of the document matches the public/docketed version?

ANSWER: Detailed instructions and information concerning PDF documents can be obtained from Adobe Acrobat or by accessing the federal judiciary's web site described below under "Resources."

Resources.

Over the course of the past several years, the AO and the local courts have assembled an abundance of helpful information concerning CM/ECF. Much of that information has been made available to attorneys and other individuals interested in CM/ECF, through the federal judiciary's website at www.uscourts.gov/cmecf. Through this website, one can access information and resources about national and local efforts concerning CM/ECF and information concerning electronic access to court information through PACER. The website provides links to information and resources concerning CM/ECF generally, the status of CM/ECF implementation efforts nationally, and CM/ECF bankruptcy courts that are currently accepting electronic filings. In addition, the website provides links to other bankruptcy court web sites, which many times provides information concerning the status of CM/ECF implementation in those courts. The *uscourts* website is a good first stop for information concerning CM/ECF.

National CM/ECF Efforts and Status. To obtain information from the *uscourts* website concerning national efforts pertaining to CM/ECF, access the "Case Management/Electronic Case Files Project" web page through the "Electronic Access to Courts" link. From the CM/ECF Project web page you can locate general information concerning the CM/ECF project and information about current efforts implementing CM/ECF in the United States bankruptcy courts, district courts and courts of appeals. You can also link to a page listing bankruptcy courts that are currently accepting electronic filings.

Local CM/ECF Efforts and Status. To obtain information from the *uscourts* website concerning the status of your local court's efforts concerning CM/ECF, access the "Court Links" web page. On that page you will find links to web sites of various bankruptcy courts across the nation. Once you have accessed your court's web page you should be able to determine where your court is situated in the implementation process. In addition, many court web sites have CM/ECF information concerning local rules, general orders, administrative procedures manuals,

local contact and support information, training opportunities, and computer based practice modules where users can practice using and learn more about the CM/ECF program.

PACER. To obtain information from the *uscourts* website concerning public access to electronic court records, access the "Electronic Public Access PACER Service Center" web page through the "Electronic Access to Courts" link. There you will find general information concerning PACER, frequently asked questions concerning PACER, and instructions how to sign up for a PACER account.

Attorneys and other individuals interested in CM/ECF are encouraged to explore and use these web sites to increase their knowledge of this exciting opportunity coming to the bankruptcy courts and other federal courts.

Contacts.

The CM/ECF project and the bankruptcy courts that have implemented or will be implementing CM/ECF invite inquiries from attorneys and other interested individuals concerning the electronic case files project within the bankruptcy courts. To contact your local bankruptcy court, you may use such traditional methods as telephone and personal contact, or you may want to access your court's web page. You can locate your court's web page through the *uscourts* website home page by clicking on the "Court Links" button. From that page you will be able to navigate to find the link to your court's web site. In addition, if you have general questions about the CM/ECF project nationally, you may contact the Bankruptcy Judges Division at the Administrative Office of the United States Courts at 202-502-1900.

Conclusion.

The federal judiciary's Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) project is designed to replace aging electronic docketing and case management systems in more than 200 bankruptcy, district and appellate courts by 2005. CM/ECF will also provide courts the capability to have case file documents in electronic format, and to accept filings over the Internet if they choose to do so.

The federal bankruptcy courts have made much progress over the past several years creating, implementing, and improving their case management and electronic case files capabilities. Such progress has been the result of significant effort both nationally at the AO and at the local court level. By implementing CM/ECF the bankruptcy courts are striving to keep pace with technological advances that have made the electronic file and electronic filing possible. The bankruptcy courts are using this tool to help

continue to make the bankruptcy courts both efficient and effective, while at the same time maintaining a high level of customer service to litigants and others accessing the system.